

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 32, 59-67 and 70 are presently pending in this application, Claims 1-31, 33-58, 68, 69 and 71-76 having been withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner, Claims 32, 59 and 70 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 32, 59-60 and 70 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lange (U.S. Patent 3,836,985) in view of Kobayashi (U.S. Patent 5,740,478); Claims 61, 62, 64 and 66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lange in view of Kobayashi and further in view of Enderby (U.S. Patent 6,456,799); and Claims 63, 65 and 67 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lange in view of Kobayashi and Enderby, and further in view of Nozawa et al. (U.S. Patent 6,339,508).

Claims 32, 59 and 70 have been amended herein. These claim amendments find clear support in the original specification, claims and drawings. For example, amended Claims 32, 59 and 70 are believed to be supported by Figures 1-13. Hence, no new matter is believed to be added thereby. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language.

Briefly, amended Claim 32 is directed to a camera including a substantially flat body having a plane direction and a thickness direction, the substantially flat body being thinner in the thickness direction, the plane direction being substantially perpendicular to the thickness direction, photographing means for performing a photographing operation, the photographing means being accommodated in the substantially flat body and having a photographing optical axis substantially parallel to the plane direction of the substantially flat body, and a plurality

of activating means each for activating the photographing operation of the photographing means, a plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions, at least one of the plurality of activating means being provided so as to operate along the photographing optical axis. By providing such activating means, the body can be held more securely by a user taking a photograph, thereby preventing shaking and blurred image more effectively.¹

Lange discloses a miniature camera having a front wall cover. Nevertheless, it is believed that Lange does not teach “a plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions, *at least one of the plurality of activating means being provided so as to operate along the photographing optical axis*” as recited in amended Claim 32. The Lange camera merely provides the single button 12 designed to be pressed in a direction across the photographing optical axis. Thus, the Lange camera is believed to be at least less effective in preventing shaking and blurred image. Therefore, the subject matter recited in amended Claim 32 is believed to be distinguishable from Lange.

Kobayashi also discloses a camera. However, Kobayashi does not teach “a plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions, *at least one of the plurality of activating means being provided so as to operate along the photographing optical axis*” as recited in amended Claim 32. It is believed that Kobayashi merely discloses various buttons provided each at a position where a photographer's finger is located when the camera is held in the lateral posture or in the vertical posture for the main purpose of improving operability.² Thus, the Kobayashi camera is not believed to prevent shaking and blurred image effectively. Therefore, the subject matter recited in amended Claim 32 is also believed to be distinguishable from Kobayashi.

¹ See Specification, paragraph [0021].

² See Kobayashi, Column 1, line 49 to, line 54.

Further, Enderby discloses a combination camera, but does not teach “a plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions, *at least one of the plurality of activating means being provided so as to operate along the photographing optical axis*” as recited in amended Claim 32. Therefore, the subject matter recited in amended Claim 32 is clearly distinguishable from Enderby.

Moreover, Nozawa et al. disclose a photographic optical system, but Nozawa et al. also fail to teach “a plurality of activating means being provided on the substantially flat body in the plane and thickness directions, *at least one of the plurality of activating means being provided so as to operate along the photographing optical axis*” as recited in amended Claim 32. Therefore, the subject matter recited in amended Claim 32 is clearly distinguishable from Nozawa et al.

Because none of Lange, Kobayashi, Enderby and Nozawa et al. discloses the subject matter as recited in amended Claim 32, even the combined teachings of these cited references are not believed to render the camera recited in amended Claim 32 obvious.

Likewise, Claims 59 and 70 have been amended to include subject matter substantially similar to what is recited in amended Claim 32 to the extent discussed above. Thus, amended Claims 59 and 70 are also distinguishable from Lange, Kobayashi, Enderby and Nozawa et al.

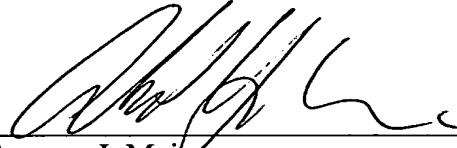
For the foregoing reasons, amended Claims 32, 59 and 70 are believed to be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 60-67 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 59, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 60-67 are believed to be allowable as well.

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In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599



22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
GJM/AY:fm
I:\ATTY\AKY\20S\205741\AME2.DOC

Akihiro Yamazaki
Registration No. 46,155

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